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Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions

Input to the work of the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum on sustainable development

Note by the Secretariat

1. The present note provides a summary of the contribution that the work of the Commission on the Status of Women can make to the work of the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2017.

2. In its resolution 68/1 on the review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council, the Assembly introduced changes with implications for the subsidiary bodies of the Council. Among other provisions in the resolution, the Assembly described the substantive leadership that the Council would provide to the United Nations system through the adoption of an annual theme and the staggering of the segments of the Council throughout the year, beginning in 2014. With the adoption of the resolution, the Assembly created opportunities and expectations for the subsidiary bodies to advance their own work in the context of the wider process of strengthening the Council.

3. In its resolution 70/1, the General Assembly decided that the high-level political forum under the auspices of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council would have the central role in overseeing a network of follow-up and review processes at the global level with regard to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including support for thematic reviews by the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

4. In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/6 on the future organization and methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission reports on the aspects relating to gender equality and the empowerment of women of the agreed main theme of the Council, in order to

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contribute to its work, applies a thematic approach to its work and has adopted a multi-year programme of work. In selecting its priority theme, the Commission takes into consideration, in addition to the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, the programme of work of the Council, as well as the 2030 Agenda, so as to build synergies and contribute to the work of the Council system and the high-level political forum.

5. The multi-year programme of work of the Commission as contained in Economic and Social Council resolution 2016/3 sets out the priority and review themes that the Commission will consider until 2019. Its multi-year programme of work enables the Commission to build synergies and linkages with the work of the Council and the high-level political forum, in order to contribute to the accelerated realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The Commission will consider the following topics from 2017 to 2019:

2017

Priority theme: Women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work

Review theme: Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls (agreed conclusions of the fifty-eighth session)

Emerging issue/focus area: Empowerment of indigenous women

2018

Priority theme: Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls

Review theme: Participation in and access of women to the media, and information and communications technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women (agreed conclusions of the forty-seventh session)

2019

Priority theme: Social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls

Review theme: Women's empowerment and the link to sustainable development (agreed conclusions of the sixtieth session).

6. The Economic and Social Council recently decided on the main themes for its 2017, 2018 and 2019 sessions in its decision 2017/208, as follows:

2017: Eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions through promoting sustainable development, expanding opportunities and addressing related challenges

2018: From global to local: supporting sustainable and resilient societies in urban and rural communities

2019: One world for all: empowering people to build equal and inclusive societies.

7. The themes for the current cycle of the high-level political forum, together with the sets of Sustainable Development Goals to be reviewed in depth, have also been determined in General Assembly resolution 70/299, namely:

2017: Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world; Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 9 and 14; as well as Goal 17

2018: Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies; Goals 6, 7, 11, 12 and 15; as well as Goal 17

2019: Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality; Goals 4, 8, 10, 13 and 16; as well as Goal 17.

8. The thematic focus of the Council and the high-level political forum in 2017 can benefit significantly from the work of the Commission at its sixtieth and sixty-first sessions. In particular, at its sixtieth session, in 2016, the Commission set out a detailed road map for the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda in its agreed conclusions on women's empowerment and the links to sustainable development. These agreed conclusions highlight five policy areas where action by Governments and other stakeholders is especially urgent in order to achieve a gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda, namely, strengthening normative, legal and policy frameworks; fostering enabling environments for financing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; strengthening women's leadership and women's full and equal participation in decision-making in all areas of sustainable development; strengthening gender-responsive data collection, follow-up and review processes; and enhancing national institutional arrangements. The analysis and action recommendations can be used as a contribution to the work of the Council and of the high-level political forum.

9. The priority theme of the Commission at its sixty-first session is expected to highlight, among other aspects, linkages between Goal 5 and other Goals, especially Goal 8. Women's economic empowerment is also critical for making progress towards Goal 1. The review theme of the Commission, "Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls", also constitutes an opportunity to focus on action taken to transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals, in an effort to accelerate the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. These topics are thus in line with the themes of the 2017 session of the Council and the high-level political forum, and can contribute directly to their deliberations.

10. The outcomes of consideration by the Commission of its priority theme are expected to include agreed conclusions on the theme; as well as Chair's summaries of ministerial round tables, interactive dialogues and expert panels. The outcomes of the consideration of the review theme and focus area will be Chair's summaries. The outcomes can be catalytic and effectively support the Council and the high-level political forum in the integration of gender perspectives into their deliberations and outcomes. The reports of the Secretary-General on the priority and review themes (E/CN.6/2017/3 and E/CN.6/2017/4, respectively) can also support the deliberations.